

From: Overbay, Michael
Sent: Friday, June 26, 2015 10:46 AM
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Cc: R6 6WQ-SG
Subject: Your friendly RRC inspector may be armed!

From today's Oil Pro Daily:

Texas Railroad Commission Chairman David Porter announced on Wednesday several policy changes to increase Commission inspection staff safety in pipeline areas in South Texas. He was responding to concerns voiced by TXRC personnel in the region that their safety is endangered by the violence in the region.

Porter said, "The federal government has been ineffective in preventing illegal activity along the border and with the unprecedented amount of oil and gas activity in the Eagle Ford Shale in recent years, Commission inspectors have voiced concern about their safety."

Porter highlighted that it is the TXRC's duty to "protect the health and safety of all Texans." Further, "as Railroad Commissioners, the responsibility extends to ensuring that our staff is protecting while doing this important work."

The following are the employee safety enhancements proposed by the TXRC:

1. Ensuring that RRC staff and inspectors who want to carry firearms for self-protection on duty have the opportunity to obtain their concealed handgun license in a timely manner;
2. Requiring inspectors in areas of concern to use the "buddy system" to ensure they are not alone in potentially dangerous areas.
3. Purchasing cell phone boosters for inspector vehicles in remote areas of South Texas that are close to the border and have limited access to mobile communications.

Porter said, "Commission staff will continue to evaluate the potential need for additional safety measures in the future if necessary."

Prior to unveiling these strengthened safety measures, Porter visited several South Texas O&G facilities and pipeline rights-of-way near the border and met with field staff, law enforcement, operators and security personnel to ensure the safety of Texas' energy infrastructure. An inspection of the region exposed potentially dangerous situations for TXRC inspection staff.